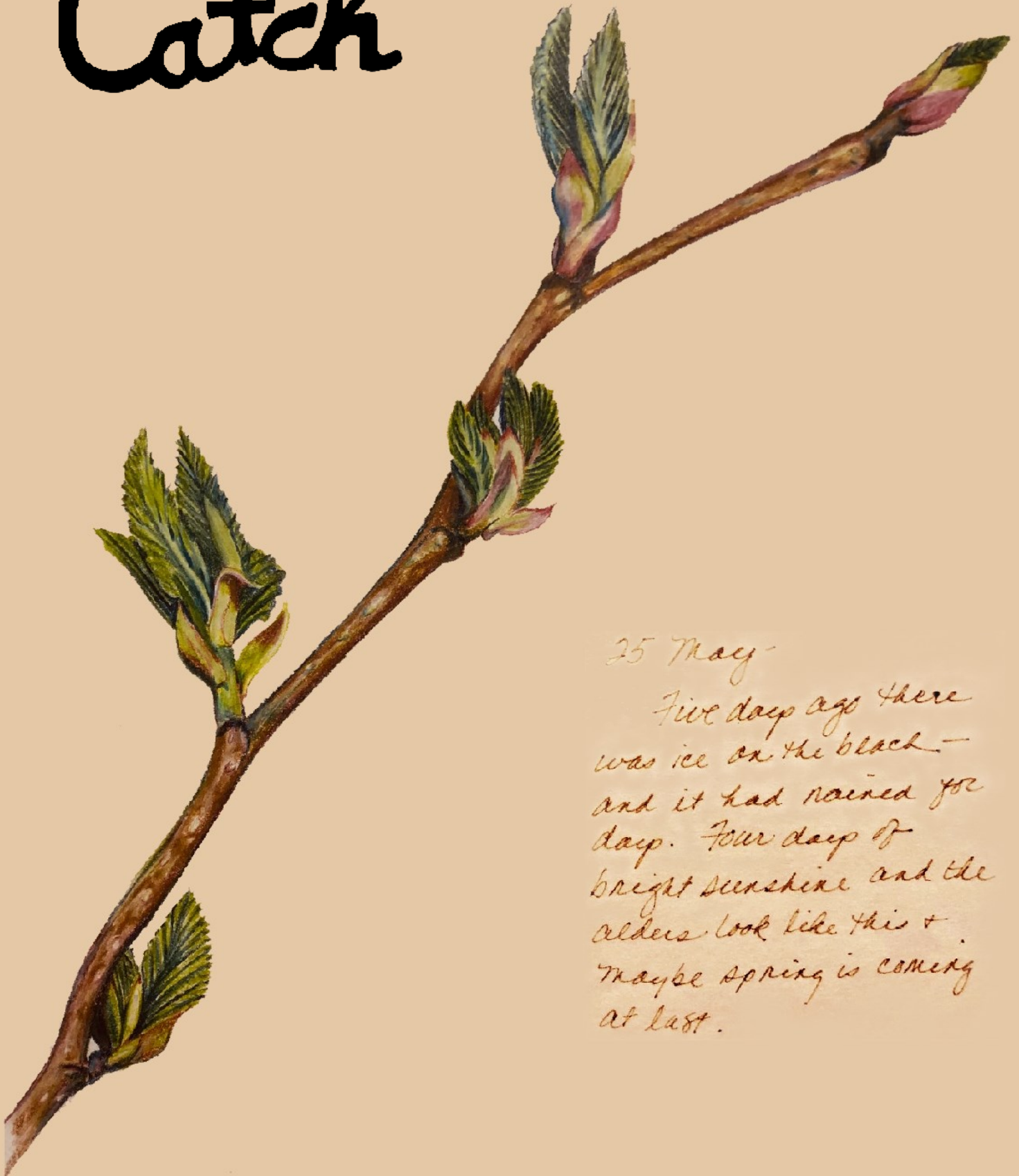


The **Catch**



25 May-

*Five days ago there
was ice on the beach—
and it had rained for
days. Four days of
bright sunshine and the
alders look like this +
maybe spring is coming
at last.*

To receive a **free** digital copy of *The Catch* directly to your inbox, email jillian.cordovapubliclibrary@gmail.com

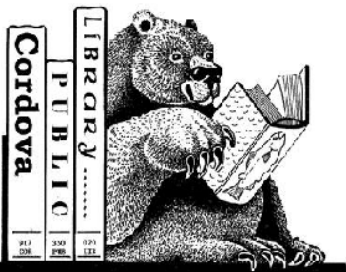
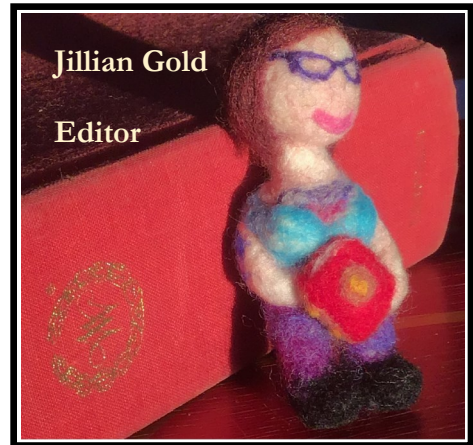
For a printed retail copy, please visit the Cordova Museum or Library.

Cordova & Friends,

Spring is here, and with it arrives the fourth issue of *The Catch*. Welcome back to our community's literary & arts quarterly. It has been a joy see this project bud, and to tend it as it grows. I am so grateful to be part of a community that nurtures the arts. To our contributing artists & writers: **THANK YOU** for sharing your creativity with the community. We inspire each other.

See you in the Summer!

With Love & Gratitude,



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

Feature your work in our **Summer** issue. The theme is

Wonder

Submissions are due by June 15th

Email: jillian.cordovapubliclibrary@gmail.com

Mail: Cordova Public Library // ATTN The Catch

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Seasonal Catch



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DISCLAIMER

The submissions in this publication exclusively reflect the views and opinions of the participating artists and do not, in any way, represent the views or opinions of the city or its members.

While some profanities have been edited (with writer permissions), there is occasional use of forceful language in this publication. Please exercise reader discretion.

A Letter to Cordova

From Danny Sanford

It is March 10, as I sit in my den listening to a mourning dove, contemplating my day. The weather has been strangely warm here in Columbia, South Carolina, my current residence. All our spring bulbs have already bloomed out, most of our flowering trees are well past their bloom, and new shoots of green are appearing everywhere. On my mind this morning is my plan for a fresh year, and when that fully sunk in this day, I could not help but think of my favorite place in the world. The place where I escape from work and pressures of my own daily life. That place is your very own Cordova, Alaska. My nirvana!

I'm guessing that at least one person who reads this will wonder deeply, why in the world, of all the places in the world, Cordova would be my *Happy Place*. For me, Cordova is escape from the daily responsibilities of my life, and a time for true, deep, relaxation and enjoyment. It removes me so completely from my daily work life that it truly provides for me, a fresh start, a fresh outlook, and a newly energized soul for the next year of my life. You see, Cordova is full of wonderful and friendly people, and filled with beauty and charm. I've been coming back to spend time with my friends Steve and Wendy Ranney for many, many years now. For me, they exemplify the soul of friendliness and good will of Cordova. I find that, quite literally, in any store, restaurant, shop, or public place I enter, every time I visit. My wife is a professional photographer, and Cordova does just about the same thing for her. She shoots pictures there, not for any business purpose, but simply for herself, to "cleanse her palate," she says, and she loves it. From my perspective, it gives her a fresh outlook and energizes her.

To be sure, I'm not all *pie-in-the-sky* here. I know that Cordova has its own set of troubles, some little and some big. I'm even quite sure it has some people who are not pleasant at all. Every place has these! But . . . this is *SPRING* for our earth, and it can and should be for us all. It is the symbolic time of renewal for us, and if we are willing to slow down and think about how to make it work for good in our own lives, we can get a fresh start too. Today I slowed, reflected, and visited Cordova in my mind. It is good! Since you live there all the time, it may be that you have to do your own virtual visit to another place, or even another time, but it may also be that you simply need to walk through your town with fresh eyes and a fresh outlook. There is wonder there, so do don't let the dailyness of it make you blind to it. Breathe deep and enjoy. You are in my nirvana!

The theme of this month's The Catch, is *Fresh*. For me it obviously speaks of that symbolic fresh start. Time to *sprout* again and to get a fresh chance to have a great year! And . . . since a great year for me includes a visit to Cordova, it was only natural for your Cordova (maybe it is okay to say *our* Cordova) to be top of mind.

My hope and prayer for my *Happy Place* of Cordova is for peace, for happiness, for a fresh awakening to all the possibilities and wonder of a life on planet earth, for all who live and breathe its air. Today is the best day to begin that fresh approach to our daily lives. Why? Because we cannot do it yesterday, and tomorrow is, quite simply, just too long to wait!

Peace for the journey, my friends.

Fresh

By Hasan Bowman // Age 8

Fresh mushrooms

Fresh plants

Just waiting for you

On a landscape of mossy

mats.



Looking Over by Darla Church // Watercolor



Photograph by David Saiget

Crabby Dreams

By Mike Towle

The days are dark, dreary, drab
Through my head drift thoughts of crab.
Is he down there beneath the sea,
Thinking crabby thoughts of me?

I lie awake, I cannot sleep,
Counting crab instead of sheep.
Crab's awake in my baited trap,
All he thinks . . . “Ah Crap!”



Tanner Crab by Ryan Casey // Watercolor & Ink

Curly's Heart

By Marleen Moffitt

My mother, sister, and I moved to Cordova on my 5th birthday. Dad had already been here for several months, getting a fresh start after a couple hard years working for Great Northern Railroad in Spokane. He had secured new employment working for Pacific Northern Airlines. The promise of a new start, and the opportunity to move back to Alaska were encouraging after the hardships of several years of being laid off during the winter months. I remember dinners sitting around the red Formica and chrome dinette table, tucked into the space in our eat-in kitchen in Spokane. Many nights cold liver stared at me as I tried to hold back the desire to cry and vomit simultaneously. As a child of the 50's, I was expected to eat what was on my plate. There were also meals consisting of fish cakes that came, no doubt, from a tall 1 pound can of pink salmon. The fish cakes at least were crunchy and

Digital Collage by Marleen Moffitt



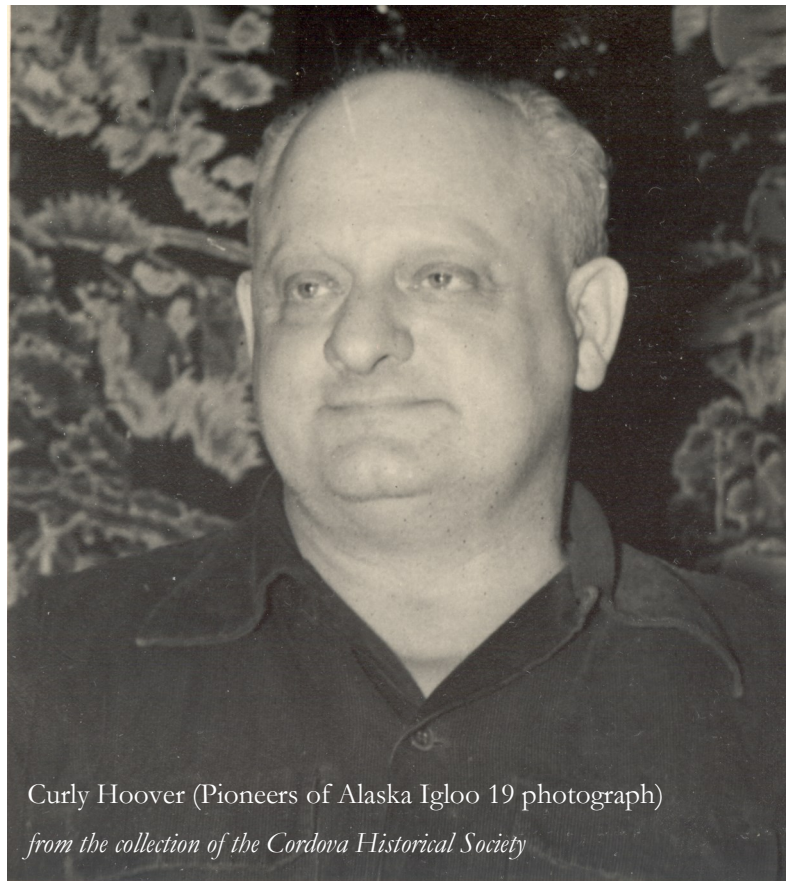
hot, and a nice variation from the mealy cold liver. Looking back, I realize how Mom was pinching every penny Dad was able to bring home. Feeding a family of four on a can of cheap fish or a pound of cheap liver showed her ability to make June Cleaver look like a Housewife of Beverly Hills. Molded Jell-O, homemade bread, fruits & vegetables she had canned, and some potatoes could round out any dinner of that era . . . But I must continue to the move to Alaska.

(continues on next page)

Upon our arrival, we lived in the bottom apartment of the Hollis Henrich's house. It still stands next to the Moose Club. Sometimes, when I drive past it on Second Street, I smile at the memories that were made in that home. Curly and Clara Hoover took our family under their wings when we arrived. A frequent occurrence, in that house, would be a loud pounding on the front door followed by Curly opening the door and yelling, "I brought you something for dinner!" Then he would just throw it into the living room, slam the door shut, and be on his way. The gifts would range from a salmon or halibut, ducks or a rabbit, moose heart or liver, or perhaps a cut of venison. But the offering I hope will always be stuck in my brain, was the time the door flew open with Curly's voice, and immediately live crab were thrown onto

the living room floor as the door then slammed shut. The hubbub that ensued, and the look on Mom's face is deeply impressed in my memory. She was always grateful for the fresh food, but not always grateful for the fresh challenge of what to do with the offering!

The red Formica and chrome dinette table made the move to Cordova and it stood in the eat-in kitchen of that downstairs apartment. New foods and fresh flavors filled the table. They were a sign of the abundance of this new home, and of Curly's heart.



Curly Hoover (Pioneers of Alaska Igloo 19 photograph)
from the collection of the Cordova Historical Society

A Book Review

By Gerald *Pieface* Masolini

Pacific Flyway : Waterbird Migration from the Arctic to Tierra del Fuego.

Benedict, Audrey DeLella, et al. Sasquatch Books, 2020, Seattle, WA.



Photograph by Milo Burcham

A Book that Oozes with Fresh Learnings

This book was given to me a few months ago and I can't get it off my mind. Due to ever more researchers using ever-improving technology (tiny transmitters, etc.), we are learning more and more (snow-ball effect) about how migrating, ultra-specialized water birds take on fuel and navigate back and forth from the Arctic to Tierra del Fuego.

The goal of the makers of *Pacific Flyway* is not to make money, but to inspire the rest of us about the magnificent outdoors all around us. And this book really inspires.

Open this book and the first things you see are, yes, many, many inspiring photos by 120 internationally acclaimed photographers. Of course, the best pictures of all are by Cordova's own Milo Burcham. Imagine being hit with 120 photos all in one blast, all of Milo quality.

(continues on next page)

Then read the captions and the researcher's write-ups. I don't know how many times I've interrupted wifey-Sue to say, "Listen to this!"

One small wifey interruption example is on page 49. It's a sideways photo of a flying Sandhill Crane. It looks like it's holding an invisible beach ball, but it's really grasping a thermal (warm air updraft) riding upward sometimes thousands (get that? *Thousands!*) of feet *without* flapping. Just riding along, ho hum. I wonder if they catch a little shut-eye during the ride? You and I have watched these cranes many times, while appreciating their music. But never did we guess that they included ho-humming along in their travels.

And so it goes with this book. Got kids in the house? This book is a must. Twenty-five bucks! Come on! Get one now. Pack some knowledge into that noodle of yours.



Photograph and caption by Milo Burcham

Both images feature Hudsonian Godwits foraging on the Copper River Delta during spring migration. In one image, two male Hudsonian Godwits land among Red Knots and Dunlin. One bird is wearing leg bands which revealed that this bird was captured on wintering ground on the southern tip of South America in Tierra del Fuego, Chile.

Deep Red Fjord

By Steve Schoonmaker — *F/V Saulteur*

Chance dances and darts
Through the calm and the storm
The gambling starts
Every opener's morn
At hits and the misses
Where legends are born
It's Lady Luck's kisses
Or Lady Luck's scorn
It's red salmon roulette
It's Vegas, free form
It's well paid and maintained
Or coozied and torn
Debted and worn

And the storms seem to know
How these openers go
When the price is the highest
Whoa, the low pressure's low
And the piece of the pie is
Where the bruise purple sky is
On the stormy abys
Clear to St. Elias

It's the first of the Reds
To the brokers and buyers
It's the gillnetter clusters
Of two hundred triers
Corking the inside
On smokin' tide flyers
Snapping at scraps
Like hyenas for hire
Hosing each other
Like there's some kind of fire

By the sandbars and snags,
And the anchored-up tenders
Or over the bars to the blue
Ocean's splendor
Cape Suckling to Gore Point
In a 12-hour blender
Testing all parts
From your stern to your tender
Wearing a path
From the shop to the lender
Out there
Burning that diesel up
Towing a flag
Chasing the ghost
Of some radio jag
Where so and so somewhere
Had so many bags
Where mean Mr. Backlash
Turns nets into rags
Like terminal tumors –
Busters and boomers
Back at the boat harbor
Highlining rumors

Flat wishing, Flats fishing
My hits were flat missing
A jackpot of have not
No Lady Luck kissing

Ah, but then came the call
That all seems more than luck
That so-timely tip
From my fish buddy, Buck

For cell phone reception
Buck ran quite a ways
So profound was the message
He came out to relay
Buck predicted a hit
And a hit any day
Where hits can hit big
Up Old Slot Machine Bay
What could I say?
Yea sure, pullin' that handle's
A hit or a miss
I oughta be lightin' a candle
When I speak about this
This . . . dimensional twist
In a glacial mist
Unakwik Inlet
And the mother of hits

(continues on next page)

Well, I slipped from the crowd
At the harbor that day
I ran her up loud
Proud, well on my way
As my bow burst the clouds
Into sparkling rays
In its wake the Dall's porpoises
Darted and played
Then a voice in my head
Sorta broke in
As I entered the mouth of the bay
Soothing tones that it spoke in
Clearly, I heard it say

*Well I don't really know
what you've done, boy
But you're deserving a break anyway,
Cuz drifters are such
To get by on their luck
And it's time for exceptional pay*

As a rainbow burst into
Its color array
I set my net in a scenic display
Of mountains and glaciers and
Reds every way
Splashing and jumping on that
Mirror pond bay
Silver and bright
As the sky was that day
Man, I smelled a catching
And with one great big whiff
It was like pulling a veil
Off the when, where, and if
It was like running some buffalo
Right off of a cliff

And the tenderman stood by
With his jaw hanging down
And with the exception of Buck
And me hanging around
There wasn't a gillnetter
This side of town
At a dollar a pound
The suction we made
Pulled the waterlines down
As what we all witnessed
Was not ordinary
Every hold to be had
Would prove quite necessary

(continues on next page)



Rounding a Bend by Steve Schoonmaker // Watercolor

The mystical mass
Of those Reds' harry carry
Was so brutally beautiful
My thoughts sorta scared me
Peeling back gill plates
In a scale flying blur
Immersed in the smells
Of the fresh Salmon *gurr*
Just a hair any wilder
And I'd a been furred
Like an animal's dream
But it really occurred

And for 48 hours
That burned up so fast
In the twinkling magic
That a planet can cast
As dawning horizons
Chase night to the past
In those twists of reality
That don't seem to last

Blue backed . . . bewildered,
And wild-eyed they'd gasp
As they slid out of life
Across deck
And the boat's just a speck
Where I pay my respect
To this place where
The glaciers collapse
To a greater beyond any grasp
To a greater far greater than cash
Paid up or due
All the false human struggles
Of driver and screw
Man, but some acts of living
Can reach right into you
An ancestral old
That's eternally new
Twisting the frameworks of
Modern-day truth
At the edge of perception's
Horizon of view

This killin' for eatin'
Is more than just stew
More than just burgers
And chicken wraps too
All the killing that's left
To the others to do

Watching death fade the shades
Of the Salmon backs blue
From the salt of the Sea
Inside me, and in you
From the guttural powers
That instincts include
This hyper and visceral
Harvest of food
Openly blatant
Sometimes brutally rude
At the whims of the weather
And Lady Luck's mood
As the gods have reviewed
Just who's gonna win
And who's gonna lose
Statistically skewed
Unakwik Inlet
When the sevens are cued
Deep Red Fjord
In the sunseting hues

So much deeper than money
So much richer than food
Gurrrred slot machine handles
Two highlining dudes



Get it While it's Fresh

By Rob Ammerman

Coyote appears on fresh cut grass.

Palm trees and golf tees.

Shawnodese.

Sniffs of the Sonoran air.

Rabbits everywhere.

Shadows of stucco structures

Provide perfect cover for rousting

Fresh rabbit cutlets.

A green desert they call it.

Saguaros are ancestors with arms outstretched for miles;

A sea of stoic selflessness.

Pollen for pollinators.

Fruit for fruit-eaters.

Shade for shade-seekers.

Living reservoirs for anything that bleeds.

Anyone who tells you they haven't played with their food has forgotten their inner child.

Coyote wags his tail and plays with the rabbit.

Wild tosses of flesh, a grin, a croon.

A silhouette on Spring's full moon.

Meat clings to the trickster's ribs.

Get it while it's fresh.



Arizona Days

By Harbor Ammerman // *Age 8*

Cactus as green as grass.

Lizard tails as spotty as can be
you can not catch me.

Plants and scorpion tails made out of glass
purple blue orange and red
Arizona sunset above my head.

Photograph by Jillian Gold

Fresh Pleasures Heal

By Rebecca Jean Martin

Recall juicy bites of ripe peach
melting 'way honeybee's
sting? They'd attacked...disturbed by a
toddler's reach toward the tree's
treasures. Yet, ancestors taught her:
Grasp for authenticity throughout life's uncertainty.

Grandmother also advised – hang
wet sheets out to sun dry
on the line – soak in earthy aromas
released 'fore rainfall's sigh –
revive memories come sleep time.
Snip a sprig of green rosemary,
tie on a pale pink rose.
Place 'neath a satin pillowcase
for a night of sweet repose.
Snuggle deep in cotton covers...
hear shrill screech of bluejay hatchling
warning – red hawk's eyes
thrive on a crescent moon! Soon, sing
with cicada's chorus,
rainbow dawn will color the skies:

Feel awakened by your dreams, my dear, for fresh pleasures heal.

Photograph by David Saiget



We are a Cobweb

By Jillian Gold

We are a cobweb of energy radiating
 Always from the Center
 Coursing downstream after
 the limbs of our Selves
 And All Else
 We Are —
 Spathe.



Natural Shade

By Morgan DeLaet // 8th Grade

New time of year
The old starts to disappear
'Cause the sun interferes
The season of fresh fruit
Shopping to pick out a swimsuit
Suddenly,
Gloomy clouds roll over
Dashing everything in rain
While you watch it
Rolling down your windowpane
Soon it all changes again
As you squint your eyes
In the sunshine
Running through the forest
Soaked
The leaves wet residue
Sprayed all over you
Riding down the river
Laying on the sandbar
Cold water making you shiver
Vibrant summer
Dreadful winter
A rainbow paints the sky
All is new
Every color has different hues



Photograph by David Saiget

Good Fishin' Cordova

Anonymous Entry

Yes it's that time

We know this to be true

In a simple PWSAC rhyme...

We are the Lucky Few...

A Couple a Cents per Pound?

Give or take another dime?

Fishin' the Prince William Sound -

Sounds Perfect 'n Fine!

May our nets be filled with Goodness,

All Decks Graced with Safety.

May God Truly Bless...

The Lives of Earth

...And All Her Beauty

It's gonna be a good year...

Keep whet that net,

Keep dry that gear...

Ready? Go!

...Good Set!

Big ole Fat Bags

From the Prince of the Sound -

The Riches of our Rags

Are weighed by the ton...

...Plus a few thousand pounds

For the few that do not know...

Join me in this public blessing...

While the Winds of Life May Blow...

Only Passion Keeps a Fishin'

With a feather on my Heart...

May we all come home

Whole and in Part...

With Paradise to Roam...

We Love who we are...

The Blood in our Veins

Shines Space for a Star

Just to lay some,

Homegrown reigns...

Reap the Sea

Be a Busy Li'l Bee...

Bountifully, Properly...

Personally, Profitably...

Let Love Rule the Day...

Let Not a Squabble Captain a Ship

Only in private, pray.

Carry a good knife on your hip...

Anchor that Soul

Be Sober and Aware

Know each one our Role

& For each other Care...

Only Stop to Stare...

At a Full Sky Rainbow...

A Whale Tail to Bare...

'N a Bitchin' Jellyfish Glow

Keep a Good Journal

A Good Captain Should.

Keeping Life Eternal...

Burnin' Wood of...

Just Because We Could...

Be of Good Virtue...

Fish the Sea with Intent...

Truly I Say to You...

Something Good

Is a Pole Half-Bent!

Know your tides...

Feel them in your sleep...

Deep Currents Ride...

Sunken Nets to Keep...

Talk to your team...

Support & Trust each Other...

On Nature Always Lean...

And be a Good Lover -

(Only under cover...)

Mainly and Most of All...

...Let's have a lot of fun...

.

..

I heard

This Summer's Call

Is a fat-ass-salmon-run!!

....

...

..

j



Island

By Lianna Towle

The smell of pines

The wind divine

As we hike around the island

The ocean fresh

As we set foot

Upon Hawkins Island

Fresh Start

By Jillian Gold

Deep in the stillness of night's final hour
And just before day takes the stage
I'm gearing up with mind-sparking power
To generate words on a page

Immersed in precious, pre-morning quiet
Before it can issue demands
Sleeps still the world without engine riot
While I pen a jittering hand

Shadows of sleep visions vaguely at play
Still acting out series of scenes
They're neither the stuff of dreams nor of day
They dance a soft line in between

And I do believe it is they who guide
My heart to hear its own rhythm
My mind to follow the drifts of the tide
My hands to tap along with them

With new light grabbing the edge of curtain
Those creative mists start thinning
I get distracted, each time, it's certain
With all prospects of beginning



Photograph by Arlene Rosenkrans

Fresh Clay

By Jenny Nakao



Snowflake

By Steve Schoonmaker — *F/V Saulteur*

First I was a snowflake
Then I was a glacier, then I was a stone, a
Scale, a fin, then a bone
On the wild wet stone, I shone
Leaking down from the peaks
When I was the creeks rushing,
Flushing, flushing out with the silt
Pushing banks to the hilt, partially built . . .
From the snowflakes man, rocks ground to
Sands in the sediments bands of
The bluffs, so sloughed the Sea
Yea, that was me, grounding
Pounding, pounding nutrients free, free from
The Earth, when I

Was the surf rolling in, oxygen,
Nitrogen and calcium, I was there
When life begun . . . so unselfish
I was there, those tiny shellfish
Feeding the Salmon coming back
Then I was their fat depleting,
Completing the cycles of Snowflakes falling . . .
Calling into
Dangers yawning with the smells
Of spawning, where the Ancestors mull, then
I was a Gull
I was Salmon's . . . torn flesh moistures lull into
Sky's condensation, where I
I was clouds demonstration of the selfless
Flowering, visibly towering to that moment's
Empowering, at the threshold of new falling
Snowflakes.



Photograph by Arlene Rosenkrans



Life

By Jeanie Gold

Newborn infant on your birth day,
Propelled from a safeguarded, warm space
Into a strange, unfamiliar place
Brightly lighted, noisy, and cold.

Birth on earth,
A monumental endeavor
Where spirit descends into matter
And soul enrobes, in anatomical-physiologic cover.

Deciphering how to navigate and occupy,
While decoding the acquired body-mind.
Who? ... and ... *Where am I?*
Recurring queries throughout a lifetime.

Years of day-to-day living
Accumulate lacquered layers of ego,
The entrenched material affinity of self,
Along with lost treasure of one's inmost wealth.

One day, from somewhere deep within,
A beckoning of something mysterious begins.
A whisper, barely heard at first,
Grows steadily louder with unquenchable thirst.

From where does this clarion calling come
And what is the reckoning it commands to be done?
Initially beclouded, untold searching unfolds
Into nooks and crannies, new and old.

With guidance and time, matter-bound ego learns
That the truth of its existence is not yet discerned,
That hidden behind its obscuring opacity
Is an indwelling spark of luminescent majesty.

Propelled, yet again, this time in reverse
From matter to spirit, with ego immersed
In transforming itself from opaque to clear
To behold its underlying, Infinitude frontier.

Comprised to realize who we really are
Is this miraculous journey, called Life!

Fresh Perspective

By Oshiana Black

The air's tang is fresh, like a baby breath
Born with a strong neck and all that hair,
Unsheathed and screaming, bound to a chord
Enkindled by our Mothers
Tied by love, arms still stretched toward.
Which remains after death
Nil can sever, or snip
A Mother's love lingers from the heart through the fingertip.

Still at the end of the day, clubbed into submission,
Frozen cumulus clouds have rolled in thick, with volition
Oniony pea soup fog of parenthood now a solid slab of ice
I'm grappling to see out, but blinded by LED brites



But after a particularly revolutionary clear eve
Witnessing the nebulous auroras conceive
I'm visited by your spirit, your angel, if you will
We hear your granddaughter sing, a Utopian Nightingale
Listen to your instincts
Just breathe another sober breath
In this you'll find the remedy
Outside, where the air is fresh
Equilibrium is an achievable goal,
The place where chromosomes lie
Even though there are shadows shrouding, know
We are one; you, her, and I.

From the collection of Oshiana Black; pictured here with her mother, Rose (*Jan. 1955 - July 2003*).

Breathe

By Lisa DeLaet

Winter

Fresh powder from the sky

Breathe in fresh air

Spring

Fresh water from the mountains

Breathe in fresh air

Summer

Fresh fish from the rivers

Breathe in fresh air

Fall

Fresh rain from Heaven

Breathe in fresh air



Power Creek by Darla Church // Acrylic

NOW CHOOSE PEACE

By Cristina Vican

“Choose well. Your choice is brief, and yet endless.”-Goethe

Peace beneath the headlines...
Peace is found in the heart and mind
The conflict that must be healed is the one that rages here
Here where there is love and not love
Here where I pretend to care when I do not
Here where I am trying to get or be better than or impress
Here where I have felt unworthy, unloved, unlovable
Here where I have hated all those “others” who are hating
Peace is always here waiting on me to see
My peace is the peace of the whole world
My peace passes the understanding of the crowds of “sides”
Liberals and the conservatives
Communism and democracy
Religious and atheist
Male and female
Right and left
Peace is One
It knows only ONE without sides
Without “other”
Peace includes the enemy in its existence and knows
There is no enemy to peace
Because peace is my decision
NOW
To be at peace, to know peace is my only decision
NOW
I make the decision to be at peace and I make it for
ALL
NOW
No matter the news, no matter the circumstance, no matter the excuse.
I can always choose peace
I choose to be at peace
NOW
I AM PEACE

P E A C E

be still and know...



YinYang Dunlins by P. Payne // Egg Tempera on Panel



Photograph by David Saiget